

Grantee: MACON RIDGE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORP

Grant Amount: \$300,000

Location: Vidalia, LA

MACON RIDGE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (MRCDC) was founded in 1996 to combat the growing tide of inadequate housing in rural Louisiana. In 2010, the rural LA community of Concordia Parish had an unemployment rate of 10.9% and a poverty rate of 29.1%, almost twice the national average. Not only is this area economically depressed but Concordia Parish also suffers from having a very low housing stock. Witness to these alarming figures, the Macon Ridge Community Development Corporation set out to revive this community using a \$300,000 Rural Innovation Fund (RIF) Single Purpose Grant.



As a part of the MRCDC housing initiative and the Louisiana Delta Rural Innovation Program, the \$300,000 RIF grant was used to encourage retail growth and create construction jobs through the development of 10 new, single family homes in Concordia Parish. In addition to constructing these 10 homes, the project focused on working with disadvantaged subcontractors. Normally, these disadvantaged contractors would not have the capital necessary to purchase supplies and equipment, nor would they have the capital to make payroll and purchase insurance requirements for a project of this size. Therefore, MRCDC set aside program funds and provided these subcontractors loans that enabled them the capacity to work on 10 homes at one time. Once the project was completed, the subcontractors repaid MRCDC, so the organization could work to provide new loans.

Upon completion of this RIF grant project, 50 new construction jobs had been created for members of the Concordia Parish community, while 13 subcontractors took advantage of the revolving loan fund to start new entrepreneurial businesses or expand their existing operations. In addition, the MRCDC formed a homebuyer education program to increase homeownership capacity for low and moderate income families in the Lower Mississippi Delta Region.

In this project, the use of a revolving loan fund served as a great example of entrepreneurship development because it provided much needed capital to disadvantaged subcontractors, thus giving them the resources to start a business of their own and take on more profitable projects. Throughout this process, these subcontractors were encouraged to grow their entrepreneurial and managerial skills by attending training provided by MRCDC and using this knowledge and experience, these businesses will continue to spur new jobs in the near future.

This project was completed successfully due in large part to the Macon Ridge Community Development Corporation and their partners, Delta Bank (Local Community Bank), Federal Home Loan Bank of Dallas, Louisiana Housing Cooperation, USDA/Rural Development and the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC). The full time staff at MRCDC has overseen the work of multiple housing projects and through its short 17 year existence, MRCDC has assisted over 150 low income families become homeowners while creating hundreds of construction jobs in their service area. In their portfolio,



MRCDC has multifamily assets that value in excess of Fourteen Million Dollars, and own a collection of single family homes as well as numerous shovel ready lots throughout the rural Louisiana. For more information about the continued success and opportunities provided by the Macon Ridge Community Development Corporation, please visit their web site: <http://www.mrcdc.com/> or contact them directly by calling (318)-757-2361.